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PASTORAL OFFICES

W. H. FURNESS D.D.

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PASTORAL OFFICES

BY

W. H. FURNESS, D. D.



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INTRODUCTION

THE distinguishing power, the life and soul of the Religion of Christ, as I make bold to define it, is the spirit of a profound and divine Humanity, which, expressed not in his words alone, but chiefly in his personal, divinely human character, he breathes into the world, and which is manifested more or less impressively in all the different forms that the Religion springing from him has been made to assume.

Jesus neither instituted any religious forms nor, it is important to observe, did he forbid any. Modes of thought and observance were left to appear, and to vary, as they needs must in different times and places, only they were not to be put above or on a level with the first two great commandments. Whatever doctrines or rituals, however they may differ, tend to enlarge the heart towards God and Man, are all equally invested with Christian authority.

BAPTISM

is universally regarded as an initiatory rite. But no word of Christ's authorizes this view of it. He never baptized any one; nor in the particular instructions he gave to his disciples as to their offices as heralds of the kingdom of heaven is there any mention of Baptism. Once only, in the last chapter of Mark, he is said to have declared that whosoever believeth *and is baptized* shall be saved. But, not to mention that the closing verses of the second Gospel are of doubtful authenticity, it is surely far more probable that the words "*and is baptized*" have crept from the margin into the text than that only on this one occasion Jesus required baptism. John the Baptizer said that, while his own influence was symbolized by water which cleanses only the outward man, the influence of him who was to come would be signified by the more searching, penetrating power of wind and fire, separating the good from the evil, even as these elements separate the chaff from the wheat, destroying the evil and garnering the good. John's heart had burned within him in communion with his great kinsman.

Baptism of infants and of adults may yet be used as a recognition of the sacred relationship of man to the Infinite Father of all.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

So also this Commemorative Service is held to be of an initiatory character. Of the four Gospels, only one contains any word of its being enjoined as a formal observance. In Luke's Gospel alone do we read, "This do in remembrance of me." Were it deliberately designed by Jesus as a religious form, it is unaccountable that not a hint of his so intending it is to be found elsewhere in the Gospels.

My conviction is that, as a purely commemorative service, it has a deeper foundation than formal institution. It sprang from the very heart of human nature. Bear in mind how instinctively men are prompted to cherish and commemorate remarkable events, and you will see that it could not have been otherwise than that the last time that the disciples of Jesus ate and drank with him, and his startling allusion to his body to be broken like the bread of which they were partaking, and to his blood to be

poured out like the red wine which they were drinking, should make an impression on them never to be forgotten. When, after his death, they ate and drank together, his words must have recurred to them, making that last scene forever memorable. Could anything be more natural? And was it not equally natural that, impressed as they were by his words at the Last Supper, the idea should be conceived that it was the intention of their Master that he should be thus specially held in remembrance? I gather from what Paul says in his Epistles that, at the first, whenever the disciples ate and drank together the meal was made commemorative of the last they had with him.

Among Liberal Christians, — I use this term simply as a designation, — the Lord's Supper is falling into decay. Only a few of those attending church stay to join in it, and some of our churches have ceased to observe it.

Towards the close of my pastorate, before I had thought of resigning the pastoral office, I omitted the observance for some time, and in that time I was only twice asked when we were to have it again. After an interval, I resumed it, devoting the whole morning service to the com-

memoration of our greatest Friend under God, who lived and died for us all. On the Communion table, there were only one plate, on which was a broken loaf of bread, and one cup of wine. I began the Service of the morning by remarking that none present were required to eat of the bread or drink of the wine, that the bread and the wine on the table were there only as symbols, that it was my office to interpret their meaning, — what they stood for. And if I were able to show what they signified, even the faith and love of him whose body was broken and whose blood was poured out on the Cross for God's sake and for man's, and if they felt their sense of the divine beauty of his spirit, of his character, then they would commemorate the Lord Jesus in spirit and in truth. Then would they have drunk the wine of the wine, and partaken of the bread of the bread. Thus all present, men and women, young and old, friends and strangers, were invited to unite in the Commemorative Service, and they accepted the invitation.

Baptismal Service

BAPTISMAL SERVICE

PRAYER

O GOD of parents and of children !
All souls are Thine. As the soul of the
parent, so also the soul of the child is
Thine. The ties of nature and of blood
which bind us to one another are sym-
bols of the more intimate tie that binds
every one of us forever to Thee, the
Highest and Holiest. O Thou Father,
and more than Father, of our spirits, in
this little one we recognize an immortal
child of Thine, sent hither, not only to
gratify the affection of its earthly par-
ents, but as a sacred trust and treasure,
committed to their care to be trained up
for Thee, to fulfil Thy purposes, to do
Thy will.

And now, by water, the means of outward and the sign of inward cleansing, these Thy servants acknowledge Thine immortal property, and signify their heart's desire and prayer for Thy Grace, that their influence may be a ceaseless baptism, keeping this beloved child pure and unspotted from the world. Bless them, we beseech Thee, and answer the prayers that rise unutterably from their hearts. May their light ever shine upon this child ; so shall they be blest, beholding it growing up, adorned day by day with every grace, entering into the Life divine and eternal, into the spirit of Thy Holy Child, one with him and with Thee.

This child, named . . . I baptize into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

And now may this water prove a true emblem of Thine all-purifying Love, and

this child be holy unto Thee, O God most merciful. May Thy servants protect and guide it in the way that leads to Life and Peace everlasting. We know not what awaits it, whether joy or sorrow, light or darkness. O Thou without whose will not a sparrow falls to the ground, we know that nothing can befall this little one whose angel doth always behold Thy face, without Thy will. Let no temptation assail it stronger than it can resist, no burden be laid on it heavier than it can bear. Breathe into it Thine all-ministering Spirit, the holy mind of him who took little children in his arms and blest them. And at last, when we all and the children Thou hast given us shall, one after another, be called hence, may we meet, never to be separated, in Thy blessed Presence, which we ask as the disciples of him who died that we might live; giving praise

to Thee, his Father and our Father, and
thanksgiving forevermore.

[The Rite of Baptism is most appropriately observed, not in public, but at home, and may be administered by the father or mother of the child, or by any friend.]

Marriage Service

MARRIAGE SERVICE

IN the presence of the All-seeing you are to be united in holy marriage, ordained of God. It hath in it "the labors of love, the delicacies of friendship, the blessings of society, the union of hearts and hands."

Into this state, "Divine in its origin, sacramental in its signification," you are now to enter. You are aware that these obligations are not to be lightly assumed, but seriously, and in the fear of God.

Do you . . . take . . . to be your wedded wife, and as a faithful Christian husband, will you love her, honor her, and cherish her in health and in sickness, in joy and in sorrow, until death shall separate you?

[The same to be said to the bride (addressing them both by their first names). Then hand the ring to the bridegroom with these words :]

With this ring, the symbol of perfection and of eternity, you plight to each other your truth, your honor, and your love.

[The ring being placed on the bride's hand by the bridegroom, the minister pronounces the man and the woman married in these terms :]

I pronounce you husband and wife.
What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.

PRAYER

O Thou Bountiful Giver ! We thank Thee for our countless blessings, but especially now for the sacred affections implanted in our hearts, and for all the happiness that comes, and all the help,

from the union and communion of our souls. We bless Thee for Thy goodness to these Thy servants, and implore Thy continued blessing on them in the holy and tender connection which has now been formed between them. Aid them, Gracious Father, to fulfil faithfully the vows of love and fidelity which they have now exchanged before Thee. May they love Thee supremely; so shall their love for each other endure. Grant them all the blessings of the state into which they have now entered. If Thou shouldst give them bountifully of earthly good, or if Thou shouldst visit them with loss and privation, may their joys be doubled, and their sorrows divided by mutual affection. And, having Thee for their Almighty Friend and Guide, may they pass blamelessly through this life, and when parted by death may it be in the hope of a reunion in that higher condi-

tion of being where there is no marrying
nor giving in marriage, but where all
are as the angels of God. To Thee be
blessing and praise forevermore.

Funeral Service

FUNERAL SERVICE

EVEN so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight. Clouds and darkness are round about Thee, which our finite understandings cannot penetrate, but we know that light and darkness, joy and sorrow, life and death, are Thine angels. The faith which the countless blessings that we have done nothing and can do nothing to deserve, inspires, pierces the gloom and beholds the blessed light of Thine everlasting Love.

“ Let us be patient, for our afflictions
Not from the ground arise,
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

“ We see but dimly through the mist and vapors,
Amidst these earthly damps,

What seem to us but dim funereal tapers
May be Heaven's distant lamps.

"There is no death, what seems so is transition,
This breath of mortal life
Is but the suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we name death."

"Let not your hearts be troubled.
Trust in God. Trust also in me," said
Jesus. "In the world you will have tribulations.
But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." And did he not
overcome it gloriously, making even the
black and bitter cross minister to his
perfection? His footsteps

"they make bright
Through the Dark, the way to light."

"Come unto me," he saith, "all ye
who are weary and heavy laden, and I
will give you rest."

"Come unto me, when shadows darkly gather,
And the sad heart is weary and distressed,

Seeking for comfort from our heavenly Father,
Come unto me, and I will give you rest.

“Ye who have mourned when the spring flowers
were taken,
When the ripe fruit fell richly to the ground,
When the loved slept, in brighter homes to waken,
Where their pale brows with victory are
crowned.

“There, like an Eden blossoming in gladness,
Bloom the fair flowers the earth too rudely
pressed;
Come unto me, all ye who droop in sadness,
Come unto me, and I will give you rest.”

“Come unto me, and I will give you
rest.” What Rest is offered us? Rest,
dear friends, in the unchangeable Good-
ness of God, in the faith that the same
Love that attends us when we enter into
this present life is with us when we de-
part. Before thou sawest the light, two
beings, commissioned of God, His very

angels, stood ready to receive and welcome thee and fold thee into their inmost hearts. We may be well assured that the same Love provides for us as tenderly when we pass into the impenetrable mystery of death.

As the flowers of the field, so we flourish. The wind passes over them, and they are gone, and their places will know them no more. Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days what it is. Thou hast made my life as a hand's breadth. And before Thee my age is as nothing. Surely man walketh in a vain show. And now, O God, what wait we for? Upon what on earth can we depend? Every earthly tie is breaking. Every earthly support fails us. Our hope is in Thee, who art from everlasting to everlasting, and in Thy Holy Child, Jesus, who hath said : " I am the Resurrection and the Life.

Whosoever believeth in me, though he were dead, yet will he live, and whoso liveth, believing in me, will never die."

What is this wonderful life-giving faith, of which Jesus spake, by which the dead live again, and the living never die but pass from life to life? O friends, it is no cold and formal assent of the understanding to any verbal and formal propositions concerning the nature or offices of Christ. It is the faith of the heart, faith in all that is truthful and pure and honorable, so that when our friends who depart this life have given evidence of this heart-faith in their characters, we need not trouble ourselves about what may have been their opinions; the opinions of the wisest fall far short of the truth. We may rest assured that they have fallen asleep in that faith which is no act of the mortal body, but the inspiration of the

undying spirit which is the life of God
in man and cannot perish.

We dwell in crumbling houses of
clay.

“Life and Thought have gone away,
Side by side,
Leaving door and windows wide;
Careless tenants they!

“All within is dark as night;
In the windows is no light;
And no murmur at the door,
So frequent on its hinge before.

“Close the door, the shutters close,
Or through the windows we shall see
The nakedness and vacancy
Of the dark, deserted house.

“Come away; no more of mirth
Is here, or merry-making sound.
The house was builded of the earth,
And shall fall again to ground.

“Come away; for Life and Thought
Here no longer dwell;

But in a city glorious —
A great and distant city — have sought
A mansion incorruptible.
Would they could have stayed with us ! ”

The grave is always open ; and those we know and love, the delights of our eyes, the idols of our hearts, vanish ; their dear forms are laid in that cold and silent mansion. Our eyes will rest on them no more. We are left weeping and alone. But we are never, never alone. Thy most intimate presence, O Thou Eternal One, surrounds us forever. It is Thy power that is at this moment upholding every one of us in life. It is Thy Spirit that is now seeking to commune with our spirits through the event which has brought us together. In all our sorrows help us to turn with our whole hearts to Thee. Whom have we in heaven but Thee ? There is nothing on earth to desire but Thy Love, O Thou Giver of life and consolation.

We cannot but feel our dependence on a Higher Power, now that we are here paying the last offices of respect and affection to the remains of one to whom some here present were bound by very tender and sacred ties, and to whom we were all united by a common nature and a common hope. O God most gracious, be present now in our inmost hearts, that we may see Thy Hand, that we may hear Thy Voice. We are prone to live as if we were our own makers and masters, as if all that we call ours, the friends Thou hast given us, were sent into the world for our sakes alone, and not to fulfil purposes of Thine of inconceivable greatness. We promise ourselves that to-morrow will be as to-day, and even more prosperous, that the mountain of our health and prosperity stands strong and cannot be shaken. But, by the departure of the near and

the dear, the inexorable conditions of this our mortal existence are brought home to us. The silent angels of the Sovereign Will, disease and death, enter our households, and the dearest are smitten, and their faces are changed, and they are called away. We shall follow them, but they will never return to us. Then are we made to feel how brief is our sojourn here on earth, and how frail are all human ties, all human supports. But then, too, we learn the unspeakable worth of the glorious gospel of light and love and immortal hope, under which it is our precious privilege to live, and which speaks to us not as creatures of the dust but as children of the Highest, into whom His inspiration has breathed a spirit which is destined to triumph over all outward changes, even over this last great mystery of death.

With one heart we pray that the ex-

ceeding comfort of this faith may possess the hearts of our bereaved friends. May they consider that, tender and strong as were the ties that bound them to the departed, all human ties are weak compared with the tie that binds every soul of flesh forever to the Unseen and Ever-living One. In unchangeable wisdom and love He gives and He takes away. May the memory of the departed, consecrated by the solemn mystery of death, dwell in the hearts of the afflicted, an angelic ministrant, forever pointing them upward and onward. May we all lay to heart the admonitions of this hour, seeing that we know not what a day, what an hour, may bring forth, or how soon and how suddenly we may be called away and others may be performing for us the offices that we are performing now. May our loins be girt about and our lamps be trimmed and burning, so

that when the summons comes to us, we may be found in the attitude of duty, like servants awaiting the coming of the master.

And now we deposit these remains in the bosom of our mother earth in the faith that as not one atom of this dust is forgotten before God, but is still obedient to his law, so the spirit beloved which a little while ago animated it is still safe in the keeping of that Providence which is over all, the seen and the unseen, the living and the dead.

Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name on our lips and in our hearts. May Thy kingdom come, the kingdom of Love, of Peace, and of Righteousness. May Thy Will be done by men on earth as it is done by the blest in Heaven. Grant unto us now and evermore all that is needful for the body and for the soul. May we forgive as we

hope to be forgiven. Let us not be led into temptation, but in Thine Infinite Mercy deliver us from all evil, for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.

Sentences Introductory to Pub-
lic or Social Worship

SENTENCES INTRODUCTORY TO PUBLIC OR SOCIAL WORSHIP

I

HE who dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, in the secret place of the Highest, under the Shadow of Almighty power. So make God thy habitation, and He will give His angels charge over thee to keep thee and guide thee in all thy ways. For those who dwell in love, all things work together for good, — light and darkness, joy and sorrow, life and death, even as the darkest lot, the bitter cross, ministered to the perfection of God's holiest Son.

What manner of love is this that is bestowed on us, that we are called to the immortal inheritance of children of God, partakers of the Divine Nature ! In the

Lord Jesus we behold what we are created to become. Thanks be to God for this blessed Revelation !

Bless the Lord, the bountiful Giver. His mercies are new upon us every morning and every evening. He crowneth our lives with His loving-kindness. Pour out your hearts before Him in thankfulness, and beseech Him to guide us in the right way, not for any merits of ours or of any other, but for His own goodness' sake, which we have done nothing to deserve.

II

The Spirit of the Lord, said Jesus, is upon me, because He hath anointed me to proclaim glad tidings to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are bruised.

Come unto me, all who are weary and

heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, for it is easy, and my burthen, for it is light.

By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another.

Herein is our heavenly Father glorified, that we bear the fruits of Holiness in our daily lives.

Greater love hath no one than to lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do what I have commanded you. I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what the master doeth. He who doeth the Divine Will is in communion and fellowship with the Most High, who worketh within us to will and to do.

III

God, who made the world and all that is therein, seeing that He is Lord of

Heaven and of Earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped by men's hands as though He needeth anything. He giveth to all life and breath and all things, and hath made of one blood all the nations on the earth.

Not every one who crieth Lord, Lord, will enter into the heavenly kingdom, but he who doeth the Will of our Father in Heaven. The humble and contrite heart is the chosen dwelling-place of Him whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain. There are made known His Presence and His Peace, the Peace that passeth all understanding, but which only the heart knoweth.

He who doeth the truth cometh to the light.

Let thine eye be single, and thy whole heart shall be full of light.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by

the mercies of God, that we present ourselves living offerings unto God, and be no longer conformed to the world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds, that our worship may be acceptable in His sight.

IV

Wherewith shall we come before the Lord, and bow ourselves before the High God? Shall we come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what is required of thee, but to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly before Him? Cease to do evil, learn to do well.

Whosoever heareth these sayings, and

doeth them, will be likened to a wise man, who built his house upon a rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded on a rock. And every one who heareth these sayings, and doeth them not, will be likened to a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and the ruin of that house was complete.

V

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. If any one thirst, said Jesus, let him come unto me and drink; the water that I will give him shall be in him a well of water springing up forever.

Blessed are they who thirst for Righteousness! They will be filled.

Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Doth not Wisdom cry? Unto you, O men, I cry, and my voice is to the sons of men. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Incline your ear unto me. Hear, and your souls shall live. I love them that love me, and those who seek me early shall find me. Whoso findeth me, findeth life.

Cast away from you all your transgressions, and make you a new heart and a new spirit. Happy is he who loveth knowledge rather than rubies, and wisdom rather than fine gold.

VI

O come, let us worship and bow down our hearts before God our Maker.

We are the people of His care, the flock of His pasture. He will lead us

in green places, and cause us to lie down by still waters.

He will restore our souls, and lead us in the paths of righteousness for his own goodness' sake.

Yea, though we enter the valley of the shadow of death, we will not fear, for He is with us forever. His rod as well as His staff will comfort us.

He prepareth a table for us. The cup of our blessings runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy follow us all the days of our lives, and we dwell in His Presence forevermore.

Wait only on God. They who trust Him will be as Mount Zion, that cannot be moved.

As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is God round about His children forever.

VII

FOR EASTER

God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shone into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them who slept.

Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

It became Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the leader of their salvation perfect through suffering.

Now may the God of peace, who

brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, make you perfect in every good word and work.

Be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for ye know that your labor cannot be in vain.

VIII

Thus saith the Lord : The Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house ye can build for me, and where is the place of my rest?

Hearken unto me, all ye who follow after righteousness, execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassion, every man to his brother. Then will I comfort my children, and make the wilderness like Eden, and the desert like the garden of the Lord. I, even I, am

He who comforteth you, saith the Lord.
Who art thou that thou shouldst be
afraid of man that shall die, and forgettest
the Lord thy Maker, who hath stretched forth
the heavens as a curtain, and laid the foundations
of the earth? I am thy God. I have put my law
in thy heart, and covered thee with the shadow
of my hand.

The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth
up those who are bowed down.

They who sow in tears shall reap in joy.

O trust in the Lord, and worship Him in spirit
and in truth, then shall the light of His Love
break forth on thee like the morning, and sorrow
shall flee away.

IX

When we draw near to God in spirit and in truth,
it is He who worketh in us

to will and to do, who is drawing near to us and breathing His spirit into our hearts.

His coming forth is still and silent as the morning. He will come to us like the rain, like the latter and former rain to the earth.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and draw near to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him. My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways, saith the Lord.

As the rain cometh down from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my spirit go forth. It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I send it.

X

Stand in awe, and put far away all worldly thoughts, so shall this house be in deed and in truth the house of God, the gate of Heaven. They who wait upon God in sincerity will renew their strength. They will run, and never be weary. They will mount as on eagles' wings. They will enter into full communion with the Highest and Holiest, into the divine peace which the world, with all its treasures, can neither give nor take away, and which passeth all understanding. By the abounding mercies of God, let us be conjured to present ourselves to Him, living offerings. We can do nothing to merit His favor. The very power to do and endure His Will is our highest privilege and His greatest blessing. Serving Him faithfully, loving Him supremely, when we gather

here to worship, our imperfect offices of praise and prayer shall be as incense, and the lifting up of our hearts an acceptable sacrifice.

Blessed are the lowly minded, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peace-makers, for they will be called the children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

These immortal benedictions far transcend our imperfect offices of praise and prayer. Let them be written on our hearts, and this place of our worship will be hallowed ground, "hallowed down to earth's profound and up to heaven."

Hymns and other Pieces

HYMNS AND OTHER PIECES

ANGELS OF CONSOLATION

WITH silence only as their benediction,
God's angels come,
Where, in the shadow of a great affliction,
The soul sits dumb.

Yet would we say what every heart approveth, —
Our Father's will,
Calling to Him the dear ones whom He loveth,
Is mercy still.

Not upon us or ours the solemn angel
Hath evil wrought ;
The funeral anthem is a glad evangel, —
The good die not !

God calls our loved ones, but we lose not wholly
What He has given ;
They live on earth in thought and deed as truly
As in His Heaven.

WHITTIER.

RESIGNATION

SHE is not dead, the child of your affection,
But gone unto that school,
Where she no longer needs your poor protection,
And Christ himself hath rule.

Not as a child will you again behold her,
But when with raptures wild,
In your embraces you again enfold her,
She will not be a child.

But a fair maiden in our Father's mansion
Clothed with celestial grace ;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
You shall behold her face.

LONGFELLOW.

ANSWER me, burning stars of light !
Where is the spirit gone,
That past the reach of human sight
As a swift breeze hath flown ?
And the stars answered me — “ We roll
In light and power on high ;

But of the never-dying soul
Ask that which cannot die."

Speak then, thou voice of God within,
Thou of the deep, low tone !
Answer me through life's restless din —
Where has the spirit flown ?
And the voice answered, — " Be thou still !
Enough to know is given :
The stars above their part fulfil —
Thine is to trust in Heaven."

MRS. HEMANS.

HYMN

STILL will we trust, though earth seem dark and
dreary,
And the heart faint beneath the chastening rod,
Though rough and steep our pathway, worn and
weary,
Still, still we trust in God.

Our eyes see dimly till by faith anointed,
And our blind choosing brings us grief and pain ;
Only through Him who hath our way appointed,
We find our peace again.

60 *HYMNS AND OTHER PIECES*

Choose for us, God ! Let not our weak preferring
Cheat our poor souls of good Thou hast designed,
Choose for us, God, Thy wisdom is unerring,
And we are weak and blind.

Let us press on in patient self-denial,
Accept the hardship, shrink not from the loss,
A blessing rests upon the hour of trial,
A crown upon the cross.

Christian Life.

HYMN

MY God, I thank Thee, may no thought
E'er deem Thy chastisements severe,
But may this heart, by sorrow taught,
Calm each wild wish, each idle fear.

Thy mercy bids all nature bloom,
The sun shines bright and man is gay,
Thine equal mercy spreads the gloom
That darkens o'er his little day.

Full many a throb of grief and pain
Thy frail and erring child must know,

But not one prayer is breathed in vain,
Nor does one tear unheeded flow.

Thy various messengers employ !
Thy purposes of love fulfil !
And mid the wreck of human joy,
Let kneeling faith adore Thy Will !
A. NORTON.

HYMN

'T is hard to take the burthen up
When he has laid it down ;
He brightened all the joy of life
And softened every frown.
And ah, 't is good to think of him
When we are troubled sore,
Thanks be to God that such have been
Although they are no more.

More homelike seems the vast Unknown,
Since he has entered there,
To follow him cannot be hard,
Wherever he may fare,
He cannot go where God is not

On any sea or shore,
Whate'er betides, Thy love abides,
O God, forevermore.

J. W. CHADWICK.

HYMN

ANOTHER hand is beckoning us,
Another call is given;
And glows once more with angel steps
The path that reaches Heaven.

Oh, half we deemed she needed not
The changing of her sphere,
To give to Heaven a kindred soul
Who walked an angel here!

Alone unto our Father's will
One thought hath reconciled,
That He whose love exceedeth ours
Hath taken home His child.

Fold her, O Father! in Thine arms,
And let her henceforth be
A messenger of love between
Our human hearts and Thee.

Still let her mild rebuking stand
Between us and the wrong,
And her dear memory serve to make
Our faith in goodness strong.

WHITTIER.

TO A DYING INFANT

SLEEP, little baby, sleep!
Not in thy cradle bed,
Not on thy mother's breast,
Henceforth shall be thy rest,
But with the quiet dead.

Yes, with the quiet dead,
Baby, thy rest shall be.
Oh! many a weary wight,
Weary of life and light,
Would fain lie down with thee.

Flee, little tender nursling,
Flee to thy grassy nest;
There the first flower shall blow,
The first pure flake of snow
Shall fall upon thy breast.

I've seen thee in thy beauty,
A thing all health and glee ;
But never then wert thou
So beautiful as now,
Baby, thou seem'st to me.

Thy little mouth half open,
The soft lip quivering,
As if, like summer air
Ruffling the rose leaf, there
Thy soul were fluttering.

Mount up, immortal essence !
Young spirit, haste, depart !
And is this death ? Dread thing !
If such thy visiting,
How beautiful thou art !

Oh, I could gaze forever
Upon that waxen face,
So passionless, so pure !
The little shrine was sure
An angel's dwelling-place.

'T is hard to lay thy darling,
Deep in the damp, cold earth ;

The empty crib to see,
The silent nursery
Late ringing with *his* mirth,

To meet again, in slumber,
The small mouth's rosy kiss,
Then — wakened with a start,
By thine own throbbing heart —
Those twining arms to miss !

And then to lie and weep,
And think, the livelong night
(Feeding thine own distress
With accurate greediness),
Of every past delight ;

Of all those winning ways,
The pretty, playful smiles,
The joy at sight of thee,
The tricks, the mimicry,
And all those little wiles.

Oh, these are recollections
Round mothers' hearts that cling,
That mingle with the tears
And smiles of after years,
With oft awakening.

But thou wilt then, fond mother,
In after years, look back
(Time brings such wondrous easing)
With sadness not unpleasing,
E'en on this gloomy track.

Thou 'lt say : " My cherished blessing,
It almost broke my heart
When thou wert forced to go,
And yet, for thee, I know
'T was better to depart.

" God took thee in His mercy,
A lamb untasked, untried ;
He fought the fight for thee,
He won the victory,
And thou art sanctified.

" And when the hour arrives
From flesh that sets me free,
O may thy spirit wait,
The first at heaven's gate,
To meet and welcome me ! "

MRS. SOUTHEY.

GONE HOME

“GONE home! Gone home! She lingers here
no longer,

A restless pilgrim, walking painfully,
With homesick longing, daily growing stronger,
And yearning visions of the joys to be.

“Gone home! Gone home! The door through
which she vanished

Closed with a jar, and left us here alone.
We stand without, in tears, forlorn and banished,
Longing to follow where the loved has gone.

“Gone home! Gone home! Ah, shall we ever
reach her,

See her again, and know her for our own?
Will she conduct us to the heavenly Teacher,
And bow beside us, low beside his throne?

“Gone home! Gone home! O human-hearted
Saviour,

Give us a balm to soothe our heavy woe,
And if thou wilt, in tender, pitying favor,
Hasten the time when we may rise and go.”

M. E. M.

RECOGNITION

How shall I know my own in other worlds ?

For here their bodies crumble into dust,
And dear bright eyes, and lips that I have
loved, —

These are my treasures, doomed to moth and
rust,

How shall I know my own ?

How have I known my own all through the years ?

By sound of voice ? by color of the eye ?
By gesture, or by smile, or form, or face ?

Yes, these were signs that I have known them
by ;

One way I knew my own.

But best I knew them by a finer light,

Sense without sign, and presence without shape ;
A thought that answered thought, a flash of soul,
Love, trust, and shelter, and a sweet escape
From what is not my own.

And I have known them best because to me

They turned and clung, with the heart's silent
speech ;

Yea, by their love, that drew my answering love,
Till on a mount, transfigured each to each
We stood — I and my own.

And so, in other worlds, I can believe
I still shall find my loved and hold them dear ;
And shining in new light and grander space,
Shall see them plainer than I saw them here,
And make them more my own.
MRS. WILLIAM JAMES POTTER.

PATIENCE AND HOPE

BEAR with thy day's long pain, —
Bear, if it come again
With morrow's sun ;
And lo ! from out the days
Will open hundred ways
To peace, well won.

Bear with thy empty hours,
And waiting, wasted powers .
Still, life is great, —
Great by all human ties,
Deep with rich memories :
With patience wait.

"Hours empty," did I sigh?

Not one that passes by

But sings with hope,

So music-full and strong,

We listen rapt and long

To grasp its scope.

For know, immortal years

Beckon away thy fears,

And prop thy strength.

Not here, not here alone,

Shall life and love be known;

That were short length.

Deep the joy-cup I drink, —

Shall I from sorrow shrink?

Come pain, come death,

Still holding close my own

I cannot go alone —

These make soul's breath.

If I take shorter way

To reach the eternal day

Than these so dear,

May they and I be strong;

No parting is for long,
And Heaven is near.
MRS. WILLIAM JAMES POTTER.

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD

AMONG green, pleasant meadows,
All in a grove so wild,
Was set a marble image
Of the Virgin and her child.

There oft on summer evenings
A lovely boy would rove
And play beside the image
That sanctified the grove.

Oft sat his mother by him
And, in the shadows dim,
She told him how Lord Jesus
Was once a child like him.

“And now from highest heaven
He looketh down each day
And seeth what thou doest,
And hears what thou dost say,”

Thus spake the tender mother,
 And on an evening bright
 When the red, round sun descended
 Mid clouds of crimson light,

Again the boy was playing,
 And earnestly cried he,
 "O beautiful child Jesus,
 Come down and play with me.

"I'll bring thee flowers the fairest,
 I'll weave for thee a crown,
 I'll get thee ripe red strawberries
 If thou wilt but come down.

"O holy, holy Mother,
 Put him down from off thy knee,
 For in these silent meadows
 There are none to play with me."

Thus spake the boy so gentle,
 The while his mother heard,
 And on his prayer she pondered,
 But said to him no word.

That very night she dreamed
 A lovely dream of joy.

She thought she saw Lord Jesus
There playing with her boy.

“And for the fruits and flowers
That thou hast brought to me
Rich blessings shall be given
A thousandfold to thee.

“For in the fields of Heaven
Thou shalt roam with me at will,
And of sweetest fruits celestial
Thou shalt have, dear child, thy fill.”

Thus tenderly and kindly
The fair Child Jesus spoke,
And full of anxious musings
The tender mother woke.

And thus it was accomplished, —
In a short month and a day,
That lovely boy so gentle
Upon his deathbed lay.

And thus he spoke in dying,
“Oh, mother dear, I see
The beautiful child Jesus
A-coming down to me.

“And in his hands he beareth
 Sweet flowers as white as snow
 And ripe, red, juicy strawberries,
 Oh, mother, let me go ! ”

He died, and that fond mother
 Her tears could not restrain,
 But she knew he was with Jesus
 And she asked him not again.

HERDER.

THE LIFE DIVINE

THAT God is Love, unchanging Love,
 This truth of truths do I not know ?
 Unnumbered blessings from above
 Forever come to tell me so.

What have I done ? What can I do
 To purchase this perpetual feast ?
 Of all the proofs He loves me so
 I am not worthy of the least.

Forgive, dear God, forgive, forgive,
 Set free this self-bound heart of mine,

That I may learn for thee to live
The self-renouncing Life Divine.

I see it in Thy Holy Child,
As never since, nor e'er before,
By not one thought of self beguiled, —
In him I see it, and adore.

Ourselves, ah ! never can we find
Till we are lost, like him, in Thee,
Loving Thy Love with heart and mind,
With Thee, through him, made one to be.

There 's no return that I can make
For all thy goodness, God, to me,
But, doing all things for Thy sake
To lose, — and find, — myself in Thee.

W. H. F.

GAZING at the sunset,
Lost in despair,
I long to pass the Death-gate
And go I know not where.

I pine for one lost darling,
Gone I know not where,

Heart-sick with waiting, hoping
To go to her there.

I turn towards my earth rest,
Full well I know where
There still are heart and treasure,
I will hasten there.

There when the quiet evening
Brings the hour of prayer,
My soul gives up her longing
To go I know not where.

I cry to Thee, Thou dear God,
This patient prayer,
Take me, but in thine own time,
Thou knowest where.

GEORGE DAWSON.

CHRISTMAS

HAIL to thee, thou Hebrew Youth,
Light of life and soul of truth,
Blest the day that gave thee birth,
Bringing joy to all the earth.

Ruling all by serving all,
Sin and Pain thou didst enthrall
From the Cross, all black with shame,
Shines the glory of thy name.

Now the conquest we may win
Over Fear, and Doubt, and Sin,
For thy footsteps now make bright
Through the Dark the way to Light.

Unseal our eyes, that we may see
Our nature glorified in thee ;
Seeing thee, divinely fair,
All shall then thy likeness wear.

W. H. F.

NIGHT

MYSTERIOUS Night, when our first parent knew
Thee, from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue ?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of Heaven came,
And lo ! Creation widened to man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed

78 *HYMNS AND OTHER PIECES*

Within thy beams, O Sun ! or who could find,
When fly, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us
blind !

Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife,
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life ?

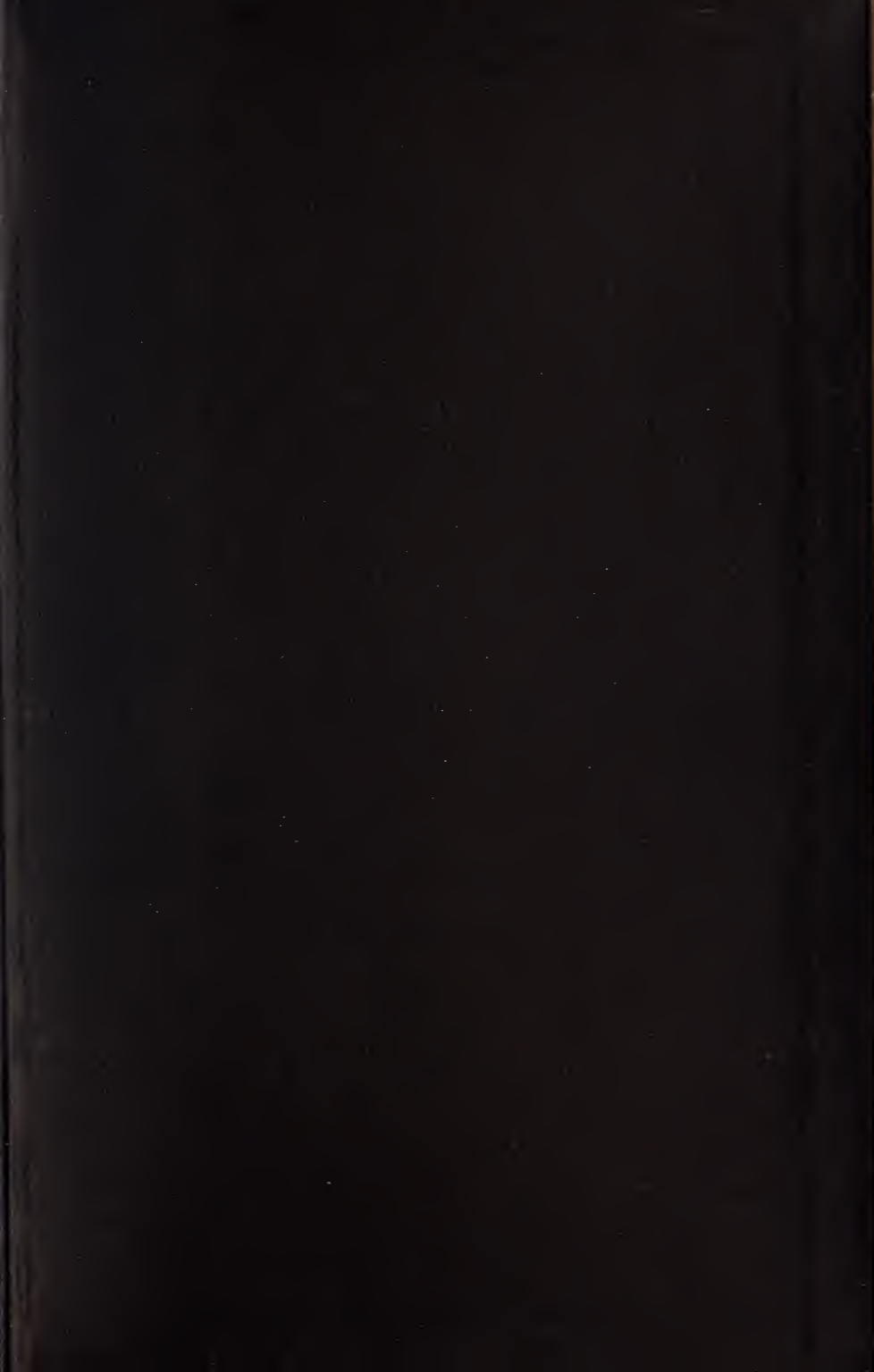
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